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House of Representatives

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July 14, 1998

The Honorable Janet Reno
Attorney General
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Madam Attorney General:

Recent news reports have suggested that the Justice Department's campaign finance task force has entered a critical phase in which decisions are being made about whether there is sufficient evidence to charge White House or DNC officials. As you know, to date the Justice Department has either indicted or reached plea agreements with eight DNC fund-raisers, but has not taken action against any DNC or Clinton Administration officials.

Given that the investigation has reached this important juncture, I believe that the time is right to renew my request to you to seek appointment of an Independent Counsel. It has been widely reported that the head of the task force is preparing to make recommendations to you about charging White House or DNC officials. The decision of whether to prosecute, of course, would see you, as an appointee of the President, face a clear conflict of interest.

Over the course of the last year, a great deal of specific information has emerged raising questions about the conduct of White House and DNC officials in fund-raising practices.

- ▶ This Committee took sworn testimony from DNC Finance Director Richard Sullivan about his concern that Johnny Chung's money was coming from overseas and that Sullivan, as early as the Spring of 1995, raised these concerns with DNC Chairman Donald Fowler. However, documents made public by the Committee show that both Fowler and Sullivan continued to accept Chung's contributions and set up meetings with White House and Administration officials.
- ▶ Pauline Kanchanalak and her sister-in-law were indicted yesterday for illegal foreign contributions to the DNC, but the solicitor of those DNC donations was John Huang, whom the President personally recommended for DNC employment.

- ▶ In fact, John Huang is the identified solicitor or official DNC contact for almost every illegal contribution described in recent Justice Department indictments. Additionally, these cover the Buddhist Temple fund-raiser for Vice President Gore and the Charlie Trie-Antonio Pan contributions, which the Committee documented last year.
- ▶ Mark Middleton, who was a senior official in the White House chief of staff's office, has taken the Fifth. He met regularly at the White House with Charlie Trie and his Macau financial backer, Ng Lap Seng (Mr. Wu).
- ▶ The White House and the DNC were putting together fund-raisers where many of the people were foreign citizens. The President attended these events along with DNC Chairman Fowler and other high-level DNC officials. It has been reported to the Committee that at an Asian-American Dinner in May 1996, there was only one person other than the President at the head table who spoke English.

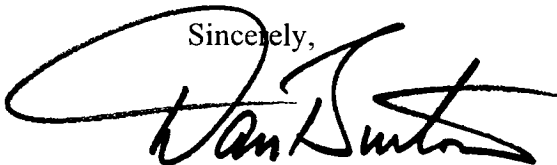
The Independent Counsel Act overcomes the problem of conflicting loyalties. It recognizes that an Attorney General cannot credibly make decisions about prosecuting high-level employees or appointees of the President who appointed him or her.

Every indication is that the task force's investigation has reached the stage where these decisions must be made. These decisions will only have credibility in the public mind if they are made by a truly independent prosecutor.

As you recall last fall, FBI Director Louis Freeh urged you to seek appointment of an independent counsel for just these reasons. I believe he was right then and right now.

I urge you to reconsider your previous decisions and move now to apply to the court for appointment of an independent counsel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Burton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping underline.

Dan Burton
Chairman